



STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS AND PRIORITIES FOR ACTION IN SOUTHERN NIGERIA

UPDATES ON AGRICULTURE AND CONFLICT

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CONTENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS	iii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	iv
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Methods.....	1
2. AGRICULTURE.....	3
2.1 Macroeconomic Picture of Nigerian Agriculture	3
2.2 Findings: Major Issues Affecting Production and Marketing.....	4
2.2.1 Land Access	4
2.2.2 Cultural Aspects.....	4
2.2.3 Labor Issues	5
2.2.4 Credit Issues.....	6
2.2.5 Gender Issues	6
2.2.6 Social Organizations	7
2.2.7 Processing, Marketing and Linkages	8
2.3 Focal Projects.....	9
2.3.1 Aquaculture.....	9
2.3.2 Cassava Projects.....	9
2.4 Partner Roles.....	9
2.4.1 The Role of ADPs.....	9
2.4.2 Role of Donors.....	10
2.5 Challenges.....	10
2.5.1 Local Agricultural Challenges	10
2.5.2 Shell Challenges.....	11
2.5.3 Regional, National and Political Challenges	11
2.5.4 Summary of Key Facilitating and Constraining Factors to Agricultural Development in Southern Nigeria	12
2.6 Cross Cutting Themes.....	12
2.7 USAID Perspectives	13
2.7.1 Perceptions of Current USAID Interventions in Agriculture.....	13
2.7.2 Opportunities and Prospects for USAID Programs	13
2.8 Critical Gaps and Cost Effective Approaches to Filling Them	13
2.9 Recommendations/Way Forward.....	14
3. STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT	15
3.1 Key Constraints To Equitable Socio-Economic Development.....	15
3.2 Anatomy and Evolution of Violence in the Niger Delta.....	16

3.3 Opportunities to Address Key Development Issues in Southern Nigeria.....	17
3.4 Impact of the Oil and Gas Industry and Strategies for Engagement.....	18
3.5 Public Knowledge about and Perceptions of Current USAID Programs	20
3.6 Approaches and Responses of Key Players and Stakeholders.....	21
3.7 Gaps in the Sampled Interventions	24
3.8 Some Important Questions.....	25
3.9 Prospective areas of engagement for USAID/Nigeria in Southern Nigeria	25
3.10 The Way Forward: Networking in the Context of Comparative Advantage	26
4. CONSULTED REFERENCES.....	28

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAPW	Academic Associates PeaceWork
ADP	(State) Agriculture Development Program
BOT	Build, Operate and Transfer
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CEDPA	Center for Population and Development Activities
CMD	Cassava Mosaic (virus) Disease
CSCR	Center for Social and Corporate Responsibility
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DfID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
FGON	Federal Government of Nigeria
IDASA	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFESH	International Fund for Education and Self-Help
IITA	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture
IPCR	Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (Office of the Presidency)
LGA	Local Government Area/Authority
MOSOP	Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People
MSI	Management Sciences International
NDDC	Niger Delta Development Commission
NIDPRODEV	Niger Delta Professionals for Development
NNF	New Nigeria Foundation
NNPC	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation
OICI	Opportunity Industrial Centre International
OPC	Oduduwa Peoples Congress
OTI	Office for Transition Initiatives (USAID)
OYDP	Ogoni Youth Development Project
RUSEP	Rural Sector Enhancement Program
SCA	Strategic Conflict Analysis
SE	Southeast (geopolitical zone of Nigeria)
SPDC	Shell Petroleum Development Corporation
SPFS	Special Program on Food Security (Office of the Presidency)
SS	South-South (geopolitical zone of Nigeria)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WIA	Women in Agriculture
WNDDP	Western Niger Delta Development Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MSI fielded a team of three consultants to complete the work of the Southern Strategic Development Assessment for the USAID Nigeria Mission during March-May 2004. The MSI assessment team refocused on the issues of agriculture and conflict, which were two of the five broad development issues studied during the first phase of the assessment in June-July 2003. Fieldwork took place in the South-South (SS) and Southeast (SE) political zones, and the MSI team made contact with and/or visited community organizations, government agencies and other development partners in eight states plus the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Mission guidance asked the MSI team to provide more current information on the community context of agriculture and example current production and marketing modalities in more detail. Concerning conflict, the Mission expressed a desire for the team to look beyond the plethora of historical analyses on conflict and to document the level and type of interventions being made to mitigate conflict.

The MSI team learned that agriculture in the SS and SE zones is constrained by a number of socio-cultural factors at the community level including gender roles in agriculture production and processing, land tenure and access, poverty, cooperative organizations and labor patterns. A goal of USAID agricultural programming is integrated agricultural development to be achieved by developing clusters of farmers, processors, marketers, transporters and equipment fabricators and mechanics, among others. Such integration of local government, regional and state levels will depend on successfully addressing the socio-cultural constraints at the community level. In addition, nascent efforts to develop market information systems and links with industrial buyers of agricultural products must be strengthened, including implementation of policies that will favor use of local content.

The narrowly perceived timeline of the ‘business horizon’ was a key finding concerning the conflict situation in southern Nigeria. Key informants in the petroleum industry shared advance information with the MSI team concerning studies that predicted that due to violence, theft and loss of social contract, among others, oil companies may be forced to operate offshore from as early as 2007. This will result in major revenue losses to the nation and have widespread development costs throughout the nation. Informants openly admitted that prior practices of rewarding local chiefs for their cooperation not only created rivalries within and among Niger Delta Communities, but also failed to yield development dividends. At present most donor and NGO efforts in the area could be categorized as ‘developmental’, that is addressing underlying social and economic disparities through interventions such as job training and dialogue. Unfortunately under current and escalating levels of violence the environmental conditions are not encouraging for development efforts to take hold and have widespread effect. Instead, disarmament is among the interventions needed in a timely manner.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Under contract by the USAID Mission in Abuja, Nigeria, Management Systems International (MSI) conducted a strategic assessment of development issues in southern Nigeria in June and July of 2003, using a team of American and Nigerian consultants. The MSI Team covered issues in five core program areas: Agriculture, Environment, Employment, HIV/AIDS and Conflict Mitigation; and two cross cutting issues: Gender and Urbanization. A final draft report was submitted to the USAID Mission in August 2003. After review of the document, the Mission requested additional work to expand upon two core areas, Agriculture and Conflict Mitigation. Specific needs expressed by the Mission are outlined below.

While Abia and Cross River are focus states for the new agricultural strategy, the Mission is also looking at Abia as a hub from which technologies and interventions would be disseminated to other states. The Mission concluded an agreement with Shell Petroleum Development Corporation (SPDC) for an integrated cassava development program that will reach 11 states in the Southeast (SE) and South-South (SS) Geopolitical Zones, and these zones are areas where efforts should be concentrated. There is a need to gather information from the Agriculture Development Programs (ADPs), which might reasonably be expected to have some information on key crops and production trends. In addition, the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) has a number of databases and two of USAID's current implementing partners, IITA and IFDC, maintain market information systems accessible on the internet. The work should involve extensive dialogue at ADP level.

In addition to the technical aspects of agriculture in the SE and SS Zones, the USAID Mission expressed interest in learning more about the context of agricultural production in these areas. Crosscutting issues, which applied to the first rendition of the assessment (such as gender and HIV/AIDS), need further exploration. While groups like IITA have developed technical solutions to problems such as cassava mosaic virus disease, questions remain about how local cultural, social, economic and political factors might affect implementation of these improved technologies.

The USAID Mission found much interesting and detailed material on the topic of conflict in the annex to the August 2003 report. What was missing, however, was an inventory of what interventions are now taking place (or recently were carried out) intended to address conflict concerns. The Mission will be focusing its conflict program under the new strategy in Rivers and Delta States, which should be the focus of attention for additional fieldwork under the Southern Assessment. Therefore, consultations with the principal oil companies in the south are needed, to learn what activities they have been or are currently involved in to mitigate or manage the threat of conflict and associated violence. According to the Mission, previous assessments on conflict (which they and other donors have contracted) have been strong on providing a history of conflict, but these have not provided a good inventory of what interventions have been tried, with what results, and what gaps still remain. The Mission therefore requested that such an inventory be included in the revised work of the MSI Team.

1.2 Methods

MSI engaged three consultants to undertake the additional assessment activities. Fieldwork took place in Nigeria between 1st and 24th April 2004, in Abuja and the SS and SE Zones as

requested. Concerning agriculture, the MSI Team carried out a detailed review of documents from the Federal and various State Governments of Nigeria, USAID and other donors. In addition, there were ‘on the spot’ assessments of USAID and community projects in several states. In particular, the MSI Team held in-depth interviews with key informants from Abia, Akwa Ibom, Imo, Rivers, Bayelsa, Anambra and Delta States. The Team also obtained data on agricultural production from the states visited. Specifically, interviews were held with ADP staff in six states, and these staff plus two NGOs assisted in arranging field visits to farmers. ADP staff provided reports and data concerning production and pricing.

The MSI Team obtained data for the conflict assessment from both interviews and documents. First to be consulted were documents that included reports, analyses, assessments and strategic planning documents as found in the reference section of this report. USAID/Nigeria, USAID implementing partners (e.g. CEDPA and IDASA), the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGON), other donors (most especially DfID and the British Council), the research and academic communities, and other stakeholders (including local NGOs) sponsored the production of these documents.

Interviews with organizations engaged in conflict analysis and mitigation took place in Abuja and Port Harcourt, where these groups were based. The MSI Team held interviews with members of civil society organizations from Delta and Rivers, government officials in Rivers State and Abuja and a representative of the Shell Petroleum Development Corporation. The Team also held “man-in-the-street” interviews at various locations where newspapers were being sold in Port Harcourt. Those standing around reading the vendors’ wares were engaged in conversation about the headlines. In addition, the MSI Team reviewed those same local newspapers to learn more about local perspectives on conflict. In the field, the Team purchased and reviewed local newspapers.

A list of persons formally interviewed is found in **Annex 1**. Actual transcripts and/or summaries of the agriculture interviews are found in **Annex 2**, while those for Conflict are found in **Annex 3**.

The two technical area consultants each prepared two documents. The first was a detailed report, and the second was a 10-page summary. The former are found in **Annex 4** for Agriculture and **Annex 5** for Conflict. The summary reports were incorporated into this document.

2. AGRICULTURE

As noted, USAID's agricultural focus in the coming five years will be in the Southeast and South-South Zones. This will build on pilot work in Abia, Cross River and Rivers States with partners including the state Agriculture Development Programs (ADPs), IITA, Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) and NGOs such as the New Nigeria Foundation (NNF). On the technical side, the Mission has fostered development and utilization of high yield, disease resistant varieties of cassava and banana/plantain.

In discussions with agriculture development staff and farmers, the MSI Team reviewed several issues that will effect the development of better yields and market linkages. These include difficult land access, gender biases, weak social organization and structure, poor access to inputs, technology and markets, lack of credit facilities, high costs of labor, violence and environmental degradation and the increasing prevalence of HIV/AIDS.

2.1 Macroeconomic Picture of Nigerian Agriculture

By the last formal count, Nigeria had an estimated population of 130 million, which is expected to have climbed to nearly 160 million by 2005 (USAID Nigeria Concept Paper and Scope of Work 2004). The population growth rate is about 3% (Central Bank of Nigeria 2002, Federal Government of Nigeria 2003), while the output yield in major agricultural products has not exceeded 1% in the past decade. Hence it is obvious that the largely subsistence-based agricultural sector of Nigeria cannot support the increasing population. Indeed, Nigeria, once a major exporter of many cash crops, must now import a substantial portion of its food to feed the teeming population.

Cassava is a major food crop in Nigeria and offers a variety of industrial uses. National production is estimated at 34 million tons annually, which is 53% of Africa's production and 37% of the world total. While the aggregate total appears large, the problem is that yield per hectare is low. The introduction of cassava mosaic virus disease resistant varieties (over 40 of which are being field tested) offers hope for increased productivity. What remains is to build market linkages that will ensure cassava products are fully utilized and that farmers and communities benefit and develop.

The poor performance of the agricultural sector has been severally attributed to the following: declining soil fertility, low input use, high post-harvest losses, lack of processing facilities to add value, poor competitiveness of Nigerian products, weak market linkages and poor infrastructural development.

In southern Nigeria, these problems are further compounded by high population densities, land fragmentation, collapse of the traditional system of land ownership, poor access of women to production facilities, inter and intra communal conflicts, gas and oil pollutions and rural-urban migrations.

The Team envisaged that promotion of market driven agricultural production, development and transfer of productivity enhancing, loss reducing, and value-adding technologies all are essential to agricultural revitalization in Nigeria. Critical among these technologies is the rapid multiplication and dissemination of mosaic- resistant cassava varieties, particularly given the prominence of cassava in the food economy and farming systems of southern Nigeria.

Hence, a technical knowledge of sustainable methods of increasing cassava and other crop yields and the social and ecological contexts at household/community levels in Southern Nigeria

form the major focus of this assessment. Based on literature search and stratified interactive sessions with relevant key players, the MSI Team elicited the following principal issues.

2.2 Findings: Major Issues Affecting Production and Marketing

2.2.1 Land Access

Under the Nigerian Land Use Act of 1978, the Government on behalf of the community technically owns land. However, individuals and households under customary tenure arrangements occupy cultivated lands. Thus, on a day-to-day basis rural land is allocated on the basis of extended families and communities. According to our sources, some of the key land-associated challenges to agricultural production in southern Nigeria include size of holdings, environmental degradation, land ownership patterns, spiritual and cultural values attached to land, and population pressure.

Generally the size of farm holdings in Southern Nigeria is very small, ranging from less than 0.5ha to about 5ha. Individuals may control as much as 5ha in parts of Akwa Ibom state; and about 1ha in Abia and other states. These small farm sizes negatively affect the efficiency of input use and mechanization, especially when the holdings are fragmented.

This poses a challenge to farm productivity especially in the Niger Delta area. Here, the oil spillage and gas emission from wells and pipelines of the multinational companies drilling in these locations cause severe damage to agricultural soils and waters. This situation is compounded by dearth of statistical data on the extent of destruction. It is difficult, therefore, to estimate remedial measures to reclaim these soils and waters.

Ownership of land in the Southeast (SE) and South-South (SS) is predominantly arranged by patriarchal inheritance from father to son(s) or the nearest male relatives. A farmer who wants to farm outside his family land however may get land on lease, rent or outright purchase of the farmland, if any is available. In Ohaji, Imo State one can buy large tracts (up to 10 ha) of fertile land these days. Ironically, the availability of such land arises from similar factors that cause scarcity in other places, extended family problems. One solution to family disagreements over land, as seen in Ohaji, is simply to sell it off and divide the profits among the contentious parties.

Generally, women do not own land. They usually have indirect access to farmlands through their husbands and sons. However, Ohafia and Brass communities in Abia and Rivers States respectively practice matrilineal ownership patterns, hence children inherit through their mothers' families, and as such women get their fair share of landed properties in these areas.

Population also affects access. Southern Nigeria has population densities (290 per sq Km), which rank among the highest in rural Africa. Population concentrations in certain areas of Southern Nigeria range between 887 and 1,384 per sq km. Also, statewide population densities in the constituent states of this region are reported to be about 551 and 627 per km² in the old Anambra and Imo States, respectively.

2.2.2 Cultural Aspects

Land is worshipped in most communities in SS and SE. The belief is that the land is their ancestral home and must be revered. Hence, any attempt to displace a community or dispossess them of their land even for positive developments is usually a source of conflict and disenchantment.

Male and female roles in agriculture are evident. For example, men clear land and women do planting and weeding. When cassava was introduced approximately 100 years ago, its value was not

appreciated. The custom evolved that yams were men's crops and cassava was for women. Today, improvements in cassava production have offered opportunities for women.

Crop processing, e.g. making cassava meal or starch, has been a female role. There is evidence that as processing becomes mechanized, and thus more profitable beyond household use, men have started taking over the means of production. It may also be that men, who control greater wealth, are in a better position to buy processing machines and equipment.

Intercropping is still the norm, meaning that yams, cassava, coco yams, beans, vegetables and plantain are grown interspersed on the same small plot. The strength of this tradition is a powerful disincentive for local farmers to accept recommendations for mono-cropping used for 'improved' varieties.

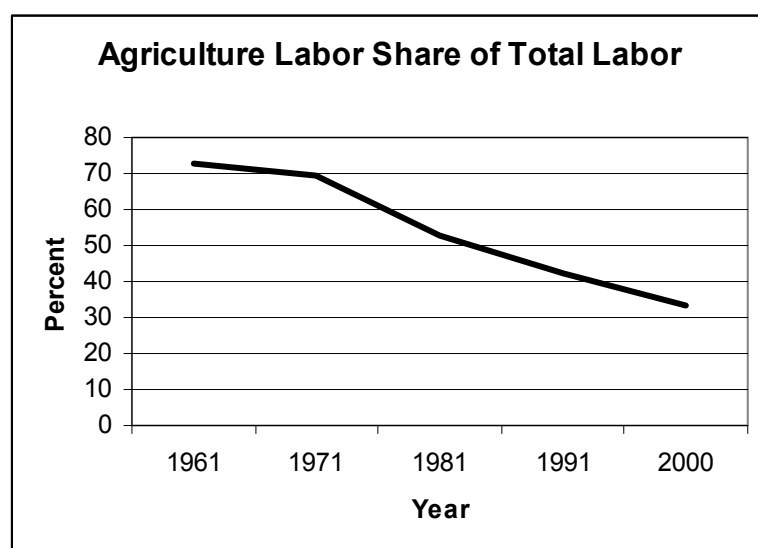
2.2.3 Labor Issues

Agricultural production in Nigeria generally, and in the SS and SE Zones in particular, is very labor intensive and is dominated by the use of rudimentary equipment or crude farm tools such as hoes and machetes. Also the quality and quantity of the agricultural labor force has declined over the years due to a number of reasons outlined below.

Labor utilization in agriculture in Southern Nigeria is driven by a number of factors including availability, quality, and age of the workforce. Others factors driving labor utilization are the methods of production and the types of implements used. Over the years, available records show that there is a declining share of agricultural labor in relation to total labor as depicted below.

Thus while the population and the work force is increasing, agricultural labor is decreasing at an accelerating rate. This is compounded by the fact that the declining labor force is not being substituted with mechanization even at intermediate levels.

Figure: Declining share of agricultural labor in total labor



Available statistics show that agriculture's share of total demand for university educated persons (of the total university student population) averages less than 5% in the last five years. This implies that there is paucity of high quality human resources for a sector that is so critical to the economy. This trend if unchecked may erode many future investments in agriculture. The poorly educated agricultural work force is likely to be less receptive to social and technical innovations that could improve production and marketing of agricultural goods.

Competition from other industries and enterprises tends to deplete the number and quality of the labor force in agriculture. This phenomenon has both local and national dimensions. At the local level the average daily wage rate in agriculture is between N500-600 in Abia State, while the workers in the construction industry

earn between N1,000-1,200 daily, while those in the daily laborers in the petroleum industry may earn up to N2,000. Motorcycle transport and self-employed commercial enterprises also offer similar wages. This competition produces both a drift of labor from the farm to competing and more financially rewarding non-farm activities as well as upward pressure on agricultural wages.

The net effect of these local labor trends is to make agricultural commodities from the region less competitive. Examples include cassava starch that could be used in the pharmaceutical industry, and rice. Efforts by ADP staff to link local production with industrial markets met with failure because maize starch was found to be cheaper than southern cassava starch, and rice mill owners found rice from Thailand cheaper than its Nigerian counterpart.

The national component of the labor problem in southern agriculture results from a significant rural to urban migration of able-bodied, young workers. Those with education seek white-collar jobs in metropolitan areas. Many, especially males, drop out of school to pursue commercial activities in major commercial cities like Lagos and Aba. Agriculture is thereby left in the hands of the old and the ageing, which must turn to hired labor to continue working their fields. This was found to be especially true among those who became involved in production cooperatives. They needed to hire additional labor in order to manage their own farms as well as their allotted land within the cooperative. Thus the financial benefit of cooperative membership could be offset by labor costs.

2.2.4 Credit Issues

Generally, in Southern Nigeria, farmers' (especially female farmers) access to agricultural credit is low. This situation has virtually constrained the farmers' ability to take advantage of the modern high yielding but capital-intensive technologies. Specifically, a common feature in Southern Nigeria is that farmers merely rely on income from their farms and the available traditional sources of credit to satisfy their credit needs.

In all the states surveyed thrift clubs and rotary savings groups formed the major sources of capital for farm activities. Farmers in Anambra, Rivers and Delta States borrowed money from their cooperatives at interest rates ranging from 5% to 10% for members and 10% to 18% for non-members. These sources traditionally offer limited amount of capital to satisfy the farm needs.

Also, credit delivery is politicized in some states thereby making it more difficult to get to the intended beneficiaries. In Akwa Ibom state for example, extension agents favor the so-called *serious farmers*. Agents define this group as farmers consistently involved in farming for at least 5 years, with a demonstrated readiness to adopt improved farming practices, and able to bring observed problems in their fields to the attention of extension agents. Occasionally the extension agents extend the *serious farmer* concept to include their friends and relations who are not farmers. The implication of this practice is that the very poor and perhaps uneducated farmers who really need the credit to increase their capital outlay may be denied access to essential credit.

2.2.5 Gender Issues

In the southeast, women and children constitute the major sources of labor for the production of food crops while the men are involved in the production of plantation and cash crops. Hence yam, oil palm etc are regarded as male crops, while cassava, cocoyam etc are conventionally called female crops. In the south - south, the picture is not so much different for the women. However, the men and youths are involved in the petroleum wealth politics to the extent that the day-to-day agricultural production is left in the hands of women and the aged.

Though intercropping is still the norm in most agricultural ventures in southern Nigeria, the labor roles are gender-defined. Men do the land preparation activities while the women do the weeding and fertilizer application, and both men and women are involved in the harvesting. Small scale processing is a female role. In aquaculture, men see fish as theirs, and exploit the waters relatively more than the women. But the women harvest periwinkles, oysters, and crabs and generate reasonable financial returns from their catches.

2.2.6 Social Organizations

Since almost all the communities in southern Nigeria are basically agro-based, there is hardly any social organization in which farmers are not in the majority. Two broad categories of these social organizations are cooperatives and community based organizations. Thousands of cooperatives are registered in the various states visited as seen in the table below

“The cooperative helps unify us. It brings friendship and care. If a member is sick, we take him to hospital and make the deposit knowing funds are in our treasury. We become a unified force in politics. We are no longer subsistence farmers, as we have gone into business.”

President, Imebogu Umuabali Fadama
Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative
Organization, Abia State

Many of these cooperatives exist only in name. However, most of the active ones were found in Abia and Imo states. The advantages of cooperatives were given as: unity among members; fostering of friendship and care; financial assistance to sick members and their relatives; formation of political pressure groups; and transition from subsistence to commercial farming, as seen in the box. ADP officials found that the most successful cooperatives were those with a special purpose such as cassava processing, whereas the general-purpose cooperatives often lack cohesion and members often cannot agree on communal tasks such as committing to a time to weed the cooperative farm.

Cooperatives are not necessarily the norm. The farmers’ cooperative in Ikot Eyo built on a government scheme to resettle returnees from Equatorial Guinea. Government acquired land in 4-5 sites around the state in 1974. After a few years the projects failed. In 1979 communities were offered access to the land if they formed a cooperative. Only Ikot Eyo responded, and the cooperative they formed has increased in size from 10 to over 200 members, but the amount of available land inhibits further expansion. Cooperative members lack easy access to inputs and markets and often sell their cassava directly from the field. USAID’s plans for a cluster approach to agriculture would help such a community, although components like tractors and processing equipment are rare and need to be accessed from the state capital.

Registered Cooperatives in Various States	
State	Number
Abia	1000
Akwa Ibom	500
Anambra	3000
Delta	2000
Imo	2900
Rivers	250

Community Based Organizations (CBOs) were found in many states in Southern Nigeria. CBOs were found to be very effective in community development. Even some government programs are executed through them, because of their grassroots orientation. They are occasionally used, therefore, as surrogate extension agents. For instance, some of the field trials for the CMD resistant cassava varieties in Anambra state are carried out in some community farms under the tutelage of the state extension agents and CBO officials.

Similar to CBOs are non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which also aid in promoting agricultural activities. For example Africare – an NGO in Rivers state – has done several advocacy

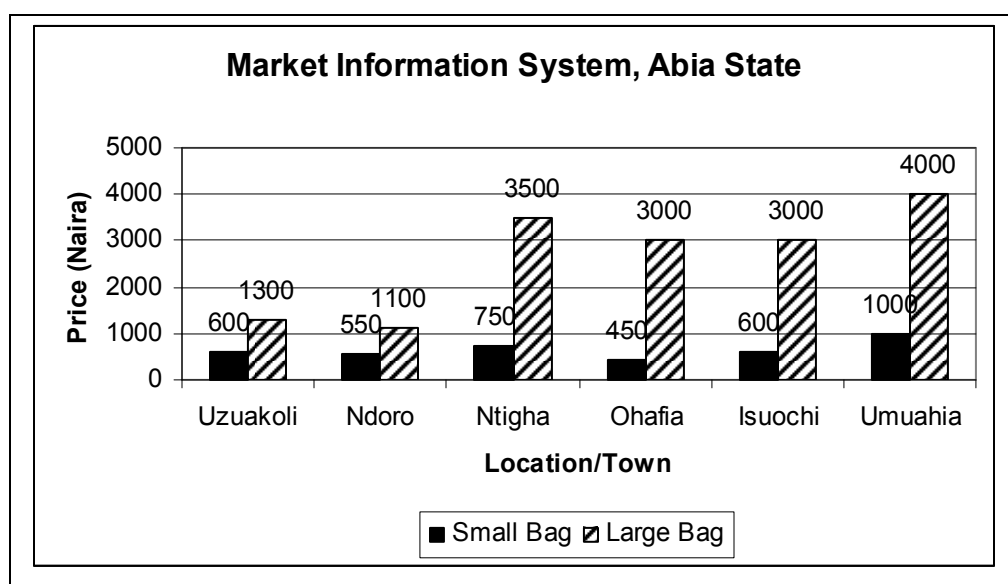
programs aimed at diverting the attention of the militant Ogoni youths to agriculture. An attempt by the ADP in Delta state to organize such a program in Warri (Delta south) led to violent attacks from the militant youths. This is an indication that some advocacy and value reorientation programs will be better received if handled by some grassroots organizations. For example, in Bayelsa state, a CBO in Boni community serves as a clearing-house for all development projects. The multinationals, the youths, the elders and the government recognize the organization. This recognition accounts for the success of the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project and many other projects in the area.

2.2.7 Processing, Marketing and Linkages

In all the states surveyed, processing of farm products and linkages to appropriate markets seem to pose serious challenges to commercial agriculture. Many farmers and farmers' cooperatives do not own processing machines and the few existing ones are not closely located to the farm sites. For example, the Ikot Eyo farmers' cooperative with a large expanse of land (250 ha) under cassava cultivation, does not have a single processing machine.

Furthermore, fabrication, mechanization and repair services are far from the farm sites. These have implications for supply of the produce and returns to the farmers. Poor market communication is another serious challenge to commercial agriculture. Poor communication among the farmers leads to occasional glut and scarcity of farm outputs even in neighboring communities.

As a means of addressing such communication problems, the Abia ADP (with recent USAID support) began a Market Information System in which 5 rural and 2 urban markets were to be monitored monthly to determine prices of basic commodities including rice, maize, cassava, yam,



plantain, banana, tomatoes, okra, oranges, ptelferia (vegetable), palm oil, chickens and goats. Only one data sheet was available to review, and the chart above shows data that were recorded for cassava meal (Gari) during the month of May 2003. Information was not available for Aba, one of the urban markets. While this information shows great variation across the state, it was not being used to influence producers' marketing behavior as of yet. In addition, information was not being collected on actual amounts of commodities available at these prices.

Another major challenge to processing and marketing/market linkages is the quality of the processed product and the economics of production. These determine the competitiveness of the product in both local and international markets. An experience from the Rural Sector Enhancement Programme (RUSEP) revealed that uneconomic production costs of starch, cassava chips and rice made the products uncompetitive in their respective industrial markets.

2.3 Focal Projects

2.3.1 Aquaculture

The Niger Delta region has great potential for aquaculture development. It is obvious that the people of this region, being mainly fish farmers will benefit more from fishery than cassava projects.

Socio-culturally, the fisheries are more available than are the lands for agricultural activities. In addition, there are no established gender restrictions on ownership patterns and access to the waters. Except for the heavy infrastructural installations of the oil companies and their associated security measures, the fisheries are open to the entire community.

Shrimp Project: The Dema site in Rivers state has been certified suitable for a shrimp project by a team of FAO consultants led by Dr. James Miller. This project has yet to commence, but there is a measure of apathy on the part of the local community as some of the leaders claim ignorance of the projects.

It is pertinent to note that while shrimp may sell on world markets, the local market is not guaranteed because Nigerians do not see shrimp as a meal. Also, Nigerian marketing is not competitive in other areas, and this may also hold true for shrimp.

2.3.2 Cassava Projects

The **Cassava Competitiveness Cluster Project** is aimed at raising the current yield per hectare of cassava through a massive adoption of improved varieties with high starch content and promoting downstream processing of cassava into food products and industrial raw materials through a multi-stakeholder engagement strategy.

Presently, one of the project sites in Akwa Ibom state has been commissioned and involves the New Nigeria Foundation working together with the State's ADP. Forms are being distributed to eligible farmers (with a minimum of 0.2ha of farmland) through the state Extension Agents.

The CMD-resistant Varieties of Cassava Project is targeted at reducing the impact of CMD in selected communities, increasing the productivity of cassava and developing and expanding post-harvest processing and marketing outlets for cassava products. Over 40 varieties are being tested throughout the south. Farmers are being asked to test which variety is best for different usages such as making cassava meal or starch.

So far, the project is already in more than 11 states of the federation and is being widely accepted. However critics are of the view that government presence in the project may politicize the well-articulated objectives. Also, some states have not released their own counterpart funding because they believe that the costing was done arbitrarily and that they should have been part of that process. Finally, concern was expressed that under local production techniques, the high yielding aspect of the new varieties is not being realized in its entirety.

2.4 Partner Roles

2.4.1 The Role of ADPs

ADP activities in the various states include provision of the following services to farmers and the farming communities: Extension Services; Market Information; Field and Laboratory Research; Integrated Marketing; Training in Management; Rural Infrastructure; and Fadama Projects (dry season farming in river valleys). Community participation is a major feature of these endeavors.

2.4.2 Role of Donors

The **World Bank** has provided counterpart funding for the establishment and running of ADPs in all the states of Nigeria. It has assisted in the establishment and running of integrated rice projects in many states and sponsored fadama development projects.

USAID is sponsoring the breeding and dissemination of CMD resistant varieties of cassava through IITA. It is also funding the cassava enterprise development project (cassava cluster projects). USAID has funded the delivery and training projects for multiplication of disease resistant hybrid plantain/banana varieties. The agency is playing a leading role in the development of the needed critical mass of expertise, knowledge and facilities for biotechnology growth in Agriculture and has sponsored innovative programs such as the Rural Sector Enhancement Programme (RUSEP).

UNDP projects have included Women in Agriculture (WIA). UNDP has organized training programs in partnership with Shell Development Corporation for Shell participating farmers and for the restive youth in the Niger Delta Area.

FAO is collaborating with FGON to fund the Special Food Security Program. Specifically, FAO is providing technical experts to work on irrigation development, post-harvest technologies and processing activities in Nigeria. FAO has provided a US\$1.3 million trust fund for the Ministry of Water Resources to undertake an assessment of dams and river basin resources for possible rehabilitation. FAO has also collaborated with UNDP in training the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development staff to strengthen their capacity in the formulation and implementation of agricultural and environmental policies and laws.

DfID plans to be involved in agricultural export promotion and agricultural commodity and service marketing programs.

UNICEF is funding water projects in many states.

NGOs: Some credible NGOs like the Concerned Universal (in Cross River), ANPEZ and ENDIP (in Rivers state) are involved in water projects in rural communities and dissemination of micro credit to small-scale farmers, especially women. Other NGOs include Ogoni Youth Development Project that is involved with peace building activities and Boni Environment consultant committee, which is recognized by all stakeholders in the LNG Project.

IFAD has assisted in the establishment of community based Natural Resource Management projects and tuber expansion programs.

2.5 Challenges

2.5.1 Local Agricultural Challenges

Three major local challenges face implementation of agricultural programs. First, while it is admirable that the cluster concept cuts across the different components of production, processing and marketing, care should be taken that some level of local identity and contiguity of members be maintained. There is a risk that criteria for selecting farmers could result in geographically scattered membership, that processing may wind up in the hands of urban male entrepreneurs, and that inputs and logistics such as tractors, transport and credit may be located far from the farmer. There may therefore be a need to develop more processing and marketing capacity in a locality instead of simply assembling the members from across a state or zone.

A second local challenge is the need to strengthen local organizations including cooperatives. The Abia ADP, for example, has helped a sample of cooperatives develop leadership, organizational and planning skills. The need to create locally viable organizations that can carry on after donor input ceases is essential. Cooperative registration and support rests with different agencies in different states. Effective cooperative development may require working beyond the ADP in some states.

The third challenge is the need to develop creative ways to address the cultural, gender and economic barriers to land access. After previous projects have concluded, family or community grants of land to women often dry up as husbands or community leaders develop interest in that land for themselves. Land ownership in Nigeria is a challenging legal hurdle as there are both national land policies and local customary considerations.

2.5.2 Shell Challenges

Unhealthy competition between ADP and Shell extension agents has led to poor coverage of extension information. Shell has engaged in ‘destructive activities’ and has destroyed farmlands and waters, but at the same time tries to promote improved agriculture. This appears to be contradictory; and many of their remedial actions (projects), are abandoned midway. Hence, some NGOs say Shell’s involvement in projects is the ‘kiss of death’.

Build, Operate, and Transfer (BOT): Shell is good at experimental farms, but poor in handing these farms over to the communities. This reduces adoption rate of farmers who are left after the experiments to continue with their marginal lands. But if the experimental farms are handed over to the communities after the experiments, adoption and continuity will be encouraged.

2.5.3 Regional, National and Political Challenges

As noted previously, there is lack of market communication within a region. One state may be experiencing a glut while another in the same zone may have scarcity. This puts the farmer at the mercy of unscrupulous traders who are more mobile, and better informed. While the Abia ADP has experimented with market surveys, this process needs to be institutionalized and spread to neighboring states. The increasing spread of cell/mobile phones should be used to the advantage of farmers.

Politicization of agricultural projects was seen in some states. Agricultural projects are occasionally linked to election promises and at best get started by a particular regime only to be abandoned by the succeeding government. In Rivers state the school-to-land program did not outlive the regime that initiated it. In Anambra state the fingerling hatchery project closed with the government that started it. In Delta state, the gigantic palm oil processing project was privatized by a succeeding regime, and so on.

The sites for the presidential Special Programme on Food Security (SPFS) in many states are chosen on the basis of politics and not suitability. In Rivers state, an abandoned school-to-land farm would have been the best site for the state’s SPFS but was not chosen, as it did not satisfy the political considerations. Thus, the present project site is a fulfillment of election promise.

Non-involvement of communities in the choice of projects is another political challenge. Many communities are not involved in the conceptualization and choice of projects sited on their lands. This has led to frequent conflicts that may have been totally avoidable, given adequate participation. The fishpond project in Ogoni was destroyed on the eve of commissioning because the community was not involved in the conceptualization and execution. A similar experience was

observed in Delta South. At present no government official or extension agent is posted to Delta South because the people are combative, having lost confidence in government.

Bias by Extension Agents is another facet of political influence on projects. It was observed that the extension agents only give their attention to those farmers who attend ADP workshops, obey their instructions, and have reasonable pieces of land as well as other resources. Such diligent farmers are in the minority, therefore the majority of farmers suffer the 'politics of exclusion'.

A key political or policy challenge is the need to ensure markets for the products that result from USAID and donor projects. As explained previously, ADPs can guide local cooperatives to produce quality goods like rice and cassava starch, but these may not be competitive financially. If agriculture is to develop again as a major economic force in the country there may be a need to examine policies that address issues such as local content for industry.

An intersectoral policy challenge is the need to link agricultural development with that of infrastructural development in states and zones. Good feeder roads are needed so that produce reaches market in an efficient manner. Reliable electricity is needed for processors and industries that use agricultural products.

2.5.4 Summary of Key Facilitating and Constraining Factors to Agricultural Development in Southern Nigeria

Some of the facilitating factors include the availability of: a) fertile lands and waters, b) surplus labor, c) natural resource endowments, d) a relatively large concentration of educated people (skilled human resources), and e) the presence of multinational companies e.g. Shell, Mobile, and Chevron that occasionally sponsor agricultural programs.

Constraining Factors: A listing of the constraining factors may include but not be limited to the following: a) a culture of unequal access to productive resources, b) increasing population pressure, c) land fragmentation, d) poor market access, e) lack of value-adding processing facilities, f) post-harvest losses, g) ethnic politics, h) poor governance, i) instability of government policies, j) volatility of macroeconomic variables e.g. inflation, and interest rates, k) unhealthy and violent land conflicts, l) the menace posed by some Fulani cattle herdsman, m) oil and gas spillages, n) youth violence (especially in Niger Delta areas), and o) rural-urban migration.

2.6 Cross Cutting Themes

Conflict: Most of the violent conflicts in southern Nigeria are caused by perceived destruction of agricultural resources, e.g. land and water, or displacement of peoples from productive lands. Hence the sustainable development of the agricultural sector will help to maintain peace, or to reduce conflict and ultimately lead to improved access to land and markets.

Gender: Except in a few communities in Southern Nigeria, men are socialized to become owners of lands; while the women do the actual day-to-day farm work. The issue of gender 'dynamism' (changes in roles of men vis-à-vis women) in agricultural technological changes should be explored, especially with the increasing intervention of donor agencies, and the mechanization of agriculture that may lead to increases in net income.

Urbanization: The growing urban centers and the consequent rural-urban migration have implications for productivity of labor and indeed other factors of production. The prospects of counter-urbanization, urban agriculture and the provision of infrastructural facilities in rural areas should be explored to curb the negative influence of urbanization on agriculture.

HIV/AIDS: This has the potential of reducing and at best weakening the available labor force in agriculture. There is a dearth of empirical documentation of sector prevalence rates (e.g. prevalence rate in agriculture). However state-by-state analysis of HIV/AIDS prevalence rates placed Benue State (the food basket of Nigeria) as the highest, but several southern states such as Akwa Ibom and Rivers also rank near the top. In addition to the effect on the labor force, HIV is creating AIDS orphans and widows who stand a poor chance of inheriting and/or gaining access to land.

2.7 USAID Perspectives

2.7.1 Perceptions of Current USAID Interventions in Agriculture

USAID is perceived as a powerful and supportive agency in all sectors of development, especially in capacity building. USAID also offers assistance in the extension of improved varieties of crops, e.g. cassava, and the promotion of market oriented agricultural production techniques and practices.

However, some NGOs perceive USAID as a political organ aimed at promoting the image of the democratic government of Nigeria. USAID is also perceived to be more involved in health issues than in issues concerning agriculture and other sectors.

2.7.2 Opportunities and Prospects for USAID Programs

Opportunities and prospects for current USAID programs are high. The New Nigeria Foundation's cassava cluster project in Akwa-Ibom state has great potential for integrated agriculture. This cassava cluster concept can be replicated in other states. Prospective areas of USAID interventions are outlined below:

- a) **Extending USAID intervention to other states:** Although some states have benefited from USAID programs, there are other states with even lower levels of development that have not received the attention of the Agency.
- b) **Human Resources Development:** This appears to have been superficially addressed in some USAID interventions. Also, tapping into and incorporating the potentials of indigenous knowledge, and involving farmers in the planning and implementation of intervention programs need to be addressed.
- c) **Women in Agriculture:** The various opportunities to reduce women's physical labor demands (through simple machine designs), and increasing household income should be explored.
- d) **Evaluation:** The implications of ex-ante and ex-poste economic evaluation of agricultural programs and interventions should be addressed to enhance sustainability of projects

2.8 Critical Gaps and Cost Effective Approaches to Filling Them

There is a lack of cognate base line data on major agricultural resources – land, labor, crops and animals, in many states. USAID can commission base line studies, which should be project-specific. This will facilitate impact analysis.

Of similar concern, reliable statistical estimates or measurements of the degree of destruction of agricultural lands and water by oil companies are not available. Compensations and remedial

actions therefore are based on intelligent guesses. Contingent valuation methods can and should be used to quantify the extent or degree of destruction.

2.9 Recommendations/Way Forward

Based on this analysis, the recommended measures for USAID consideration are listed below:

- a) Improve communication of current prices of major crops in named urban and rural markets so as to know where to get the best value for their products.
- b) Provide workable incentives or other measures to discourage ADPs and staff to stay out of politics, in order to ensure that the intended beneficiaries are not excluded on political grounds from the benefits of government programs.
- c) Involve communities/local NGOs in project conceptualization and implementation to enhance ownership, tolerance, cooperation and successful completion of projects.
- d) Encourage competitive quality and pricing policies through effective ex-ante and ex-poste economic evaluation of projects.
- e) Facilitate construction and maintenance of feeder roads to ensure efficient and effective distribution of agricultural products.
- f) Give priority attention to the maintenance of a constant supply of energy as needed for processing of agricultural products to avoid artificial scarcity of and hence uncompetitive pricing.
- g) Commission sector-targeted baseline studies, and create institutional mechanisms to verify, maintain and update such data on a regular basis.
- h) Monitor closely those projects that are implemented with or through government to avoid politicization of the distribution of benefits by staff.
- i) Establish skill acquisition centers for training in fish pond management, poultry and small-ruminant production, machine fabrication, computer skills, cloth weaving and hair dressing etc.
- j) Sponsor programs on HIV/AIDS awareness amongst farmers and assist those with AIDS by subsidizing their treatment.
- k) Improve women's access to productive resources through micro credit.

3. STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT

The Nigerian society has been bedeviled by violent conflicts. These conflicts have given rise to human displacement and loss of lives and property on a massive scale, and they pose a serious threat to the survival and well being of democratic governance in the most populous black country in the world. In June-July 2003, USAID carried out an assessment of its potential role in mitigating the conflicts. The assessment indicated that the conflict issues have strong linkages with issues of job creation and employment, agricultural growth, HIV/AIDS prevention, and women's empowerment. What is missing from the June-July 2003 assessment, which is the focus of the present assessment, is an inventory of what interventions are now taking place (or were recently carried out) that were intended to address conflict concerns in Southern Nigeria since 1999. This inventory has now been carried out, in consultation with key players and stakeholders in civil society, government and industry.

Unrest has big impact on Nigeria oil output

Bloomberg
Friday, June 11, 2004
International Herald Tribune
<http://www.ihl.com/articles/524461.htm>

Report draws bleak picture for Shell

Royal Dutch/Shell Group may have to quit onshore production in Nigeria, which supplies 9 percent of the company's oil, because of escalating civil strife, according to a new report.

Violence in the Niger River delta, where a majority of Nigeria's oil reserves are located, kills about 1,000 people a year, on par with conflicts in Chechnya and Colombia, according to the report. The 93-page survey said criminal gangs sell stolen oil to buy weapons, and it said that Shell itself "feeds" the violence and may have to leave the area by 2009.

Dated December 2003, the study was commissioned by Shell and conducted by WAC Global Services, a group of specialists in conflict resolution based in Lagos, Nigeria. Bloomberg News obtained a copy of the report.

Few if any Nigerian states are immune from conflict, but in order to give the assessment more focus the MSI Team recognized the importance of conflict based in Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta States, which combine a variety of ethnic, economic and social elements. In this setting there are conflicts pitting ethnic groups against each other, youth against elders, indigenous people against multi-national companies, local cults and militias against national security forces and supporters of one political candidate against those of another. A consultant with Shell Petroleum Development Corporation (SPDC) offered as yet unpublished information from a consultancy report that the annual number of conflict-related deaths in the Niger Delta rivals those in Chechnya and Colombia. A series of news releases later confirmed this, as seen in the box to the left.

3.1 Key Constraints To Equitable Socio-Economic Development

Most of the social conflicts in Nigeria that lead to violence can be explained around the issue of inequality between groups – whether ethnic, religious or ideological. Most of the violent conflicts in southern Nigeria are woven around issues of horizontal inequality but are made potent by issues of vertical inequality (poverty). Many southern Nigerians are disturbed by the perceived regional power imbalance in the country. Southerners perceive themselves to have been locked out of federal power since the Nigerian independence in 1960 by the Hausa-Fulani. Even now that a Yoruba

person, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, is ruling the country, the Yoruba speaking people of the south-west still perceive themselves to be marginalized.

The Igbo consider themselves to be more marginalized under the Nigerian federalism than the Yoruba, and the people of the Niger Delta consider themselves to be the most marginalized of all Nigerian groups. In contrast to the Yoruba, people in the South-South such as the Ogoni explain that education and other social amenities came to their areas late. They complain that though the oil that sustains the Nigerian state is produced in their community, they are the least developed in terms of provision of social infrastructures, political opportunities and youth development. The people of the Niger Delta also complain that their environments are degraded by oil production activities. Rather than responding positively to the demands of the people, the government has been repressive to the Niger Delta people. This has led to the escalation of the Niger Delta crisis with the militant youths in different parts of the region seizing oil flow stations, kidnapping and sometimes killing oil workers.

The Niger Delta communities sometimes fight one another over the control of oil-rich land or over the sharing of the money given to them by oil companies. Appendix 1 sheds more light on the nature of problems in each of the sub-regions in Southern Nigeria. Within communities, conflict erupts between youth and community leaders who are seen as having squandered largesse provided by the oil companies.

3.2 Anatomy and Evolution of Violence in the Niger Delta

A list of the most potent conflicts in the Niger Delta was compiled in the Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) exercise, coordinated by the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution in collaboration with the UK Department of International Development (DfID), the World Bank, UNDP and USAID between the 24th August and the 9th of September, 2002. The key objective of the project was to (i) identify current trends in the evolution and expression of conflict in each zone, (ii) analyze responses to conflict and potential conflict by state and non-state actors, and (iii) make recommendations to the government and foreign agencies involved in conflict mitigation programs in Nigeria. The team of scholars that worked on the project produced the following as the main conflicts in the Niger Delta region:

Table 3.1		
Areas/Groups Involved	Nature of Conflict	Basis of Conflict
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oku Iboku (in Itu Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State) and Usung Esuk (in Odukpani Local Government Area, Cross River State). 	Inter-State boundary dispute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boundary Economic Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eleme and Okirika (both in Rivers State). 	Communal Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boundary Ownership of benefits from oil Refinery and Petrochemical Industries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Itsekiri, Urhobo and Ijaw (all in Delta State). 	Ethnic Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political Supremacy in Warri City.

The conflicts identified by the SCA team in 2002 have not only escalated, more new ones have now been added to the existing long list. For example the only conflict identified in the SCA for Rivers State is the Eleme/Okrika crisis. The problems in this part of the state have become more

complex, involving more parties and issues due to the politicization of the community conflict issues by the politicians. Most of the politicians now find it difficult to retrieve the arms provided to militant youths during the 2003 and 2004 elections. These armed youths have now organized themselves into cult groups and movements, and now threaten the security of the entire Rivers State. Several people have been killed in the state by these militant youths.

The militant youths in Delta and Bayelsa States now provide “security cover” for oil bunkers and use the arms procured from their lucrative business with oil thieves to fuel community conflicts (most especially the Warri crisis). Several people – including the soldiers sent to the region for peacekeeping – were killed by these heavily armed youths. The conflicts in different parts of the Niger Delta region have led to horrendous humanitarian crises. Displaced persons from the region have fled to different parts of southern Nigeria.

Table 3.2 outlines how these conflicts and violence have changed in the region. The Strategic Conflict Assessment sponsored in 2002 by a multi-donor group looked at the conflict situation in each of the six zones. That report highlighted the escalation of violence and predicted what was found in the current assessment concerning election violence and the fact that violence has taken on a life of its own. The table also includes what a consultant from SPDC described as the narrowing business horizon. Continued extrapolation of current violence trends will draw to a close the onshore oil production and extreme loss of revenue for the government as thugs take over the abandoned wells.

Table 3.2 Changing Perspectives on Violence in the Delta		
2002 Strategic Conflict Assessment	2004 Southern Assessment	2005 and Beyond “The Business Horizon”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict arises from clashes over resources, status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence detached from historical causes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence institutionalized
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast growth of ‘cult’ groups – alleged personal ‘thug armies’ of politicians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Thug armies’ rig elections: ’03 Gubernatorial, ’04 LGA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political candidates increase arming militias
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police often find themselves undefended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politicians find difficulty retrieving arms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elections of 2007 replicate 2003-04 state and local violence levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widespread availability of small arms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnic militias independent, professionalized, get contracts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Militias take over means of oil production, deny government income
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipated that violence will increase during local government elections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political violence, arms race the norm fueled by stolen oil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil companies move offshore where possible

3.3 Opportunities to Address Key Development Issues in Southern Nigeria

While much has been and is currently being done to address the problem of violent conflicts in Nigeria (most particularly in the Niger Delta region), very little change has taken place in these conflicts. To the contrary, the tension in different parts of the country has been increasing. One of the problems is that many of the agencies (local and international) that are working on these conflicts are not networking. They compete rather than cooperate in dealing with the problems. The layers of consultations already started by each of these organizations can serve, however, as springboards for other projects to be funded by USAID. For example, Academic Associates PeaceWork (in

collaboration with USAID/Nigeria, Macarthur Foundation, the United States Institute for Peace, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, etc.), the International Foundation for Education and Self-Help (IFESH), the Niger Delta Civil Society Coalition, the Niger Delta Professionals for Development (NDPRODEV), and several other non-governmental organizations are working towards building sustainable peace in different parts of the Niger Delta.

The governments of the three states in the region, Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers are also working towards being seen to be doing something about the conflicts, though the majority of the people do not trust any of these governments. The government of Delta State, for example, has set up a Ministry of Inter-Ethnic Relations and Crisis Management with a view to providing a more formal forum for dealing with the incessant clashes between the Itsekiri, Urhobo and Ijaw in the state. The Delta State House of Assembly has also passed a bill on the creation of “Development Centers” in each of the three local government council areas in Warri. The centers aim to engage in productive activities that would help to allay the fear of group marginalization in the town. Politicians have been blamed for the proliferation of arms in the region. Ironically Governor Odili of Rivers announced on May 19, 2004 that his government is now ready to pay some money for all weapons and arms that the militant youths in the state surrender to the police. All these programs and projects have created platforms for the development of other future projects.

So high is the scale of destructive conflicts in Nigeria that the federal government recently directed that all institutions of higher learning in Nigeria to start teaching “Peace and Conflict Studies” as part of the General Studies (GES) starting from the 2005/6 academic session. Peace education is also to become part and parcel of secondary school education in the country. Shortly before these new policies, the federal government set up Presidential Committees on arms proliferation, national security and human displacement in the country. Each of these committees has submitted its report and some of the recommendations are already being implemented. The government also established the National Emergency Management Authority (NEMA) to take charge of displaced people in different parts of the country. An Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) was also established at the Presidency charged with the responsibility of researching into conflict issues in Nigeria and different parts of Africa. The Institute of African Studies at the University of Ibadan now runs academic degrees (MA, MPhil and PhD) in Peace and Conflict Studies.

SPDC is currently reviewing its community relations policies. The company is working towards evolving a more people-friendly system that can support sustainable development in the Niger Delta. The organization is also ready to work with any other stakeholders that are interested in doing peace work in the region. This and the other programs mentioned earlier are opportunities that the proposed USAID intervention in Nigeria can capitalize on for better effectiveness.

3.4 Impact of the Oil and Gas Industry and Strategies for Engagement

The oil and gas industry in the Niger Delta impacts negatively on people’s livelihood in different ways. The following concerns were identified in the course of our field investigation:

- Dredging leads to turbidity and to the accumulation of leaves on the banks of rivers.
- Gas flaring, open disposal of wastes, chemicals, and sludge kill forest plants and fauna. Gas flaring also causes acid rain, which has a dire impact on agricultural production and water sources.

- Oil companies have historically been reluctant to pay compensations for oil pollution.
- Laws governing oil activities in Nigeria: the Petroleum Act of 1969, the Oil Pipelines Act, the Land Use Act and section 34 of the 1979 Constitution prevent Niger Delta people from getting adequate compensation for their land taken for oil explorations.
- Oil companies barely employ any Niger Delta youths (although the oil industry is capital intensive and accounts for only 3% of employment nationally).

Figure 3.1



All of the factors described above account for the high rate of frustration (often leading to violence) often expressed by the people of the Niger Delta communities. The youth of the Niger Delta, in an expression of their deep frustration, sometimes blow up some of the oil pipelines. They have been known to kidnap oil workers and demand ransom for releasing them. Recently Nigerian and expatriate oil workers and their Navy guards were murdered in Delta State. Local militants support oil bunkerers and scoopers, and now engage in arms trafficking supported by oil bunkerers, who consist of "top police, military and security chiefs, very highly placed politicians, and some first class traditional rulers" (Tell April 19, 2004:19).

The oil stolen from the Niger Delta on a daily basis, according to Shell sources, is put at between 60,000 to 90,000 barrels. The Nigerian Navy believes that the figure could be as high as 150,000 barrels per day. This is a serious national security issue for Nigeria given the fact that the country earns about 90% of her export earnings from oil. Commenting on this unfortunate situation, Tell Magazine reported that the militant youths "control the bunkering routes and the creeks. Because of their mastery of the areas, the rest of the mafia (in the oil theft business) must necessarily defer to them if they must pass freely. Security sources say, control of the bunkering routes rather than politics is responsible for much of the unrest in the Niger Delta".

The oil companies in the Niger Delta, working very closely with USAID/Nigeria and other donor agencies, must collaborate to develop short term, middle term and long term solutions to the problems mentioned above. Oil companies must develop more friendly and responsible ways for doing their business in the region. The problems of oil spillage, gas flaring, and the like must be dealt with creatively and with some urgency. Table 3.3 outlines three broad approaches to conflict mitigation.

At the level of implementation, the short, middle and long-term projects must be carefully linked. It became clear that most agencies, including the oil companies, have been engaged in micro or development-oriented interventions. Successes have been measured anecdotally in terms of individuals who have been turned away from violence, but with the exception of a negotiated truce in Delta State by IFESH, it has been difficult for development-oriented projects to take root when armed militancy is on the rise, especially after recent elections.

Table 3.3 Approaches to Prevent Violence		
<i>Micro (Sustainable Development)</i>	<i>Macro</i>	<i>Global</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support agricultural production to boost local food supply and promote income generation. • Health programs (community health centers); preventing and controlling HIV/AIDS • Small and medium scale industries • Formal and informal peace education • Actionable early warning systems • Cleaning up oil pollution; paying compensation on time. • Conflict resolution training to build local capacity in constructive conflict handling • Third party intervention through conciliation, mediation, or arbitration • Humanitarian intervention (relief services, trauma counseling, etc.) • Rebuilding the capacity of conflict management NGOs to respond to present challenges (early warning signs monitoring, humanitarian assistance needs, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote good governance • Election reforms • Transparency and accountability • Law and order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent oil theft • Stop money laundering • Small arms control • Reduce corruption and strengthen integrity • Rebuilding the leadership capacity and integrity of community leaders and local government officials;

3.5 Public Knowledge about and Perceptions of Current USAID Programs

Our informants perceived the acronym “USAID” to consist of three sets of organizations: USAID/Nigeria, USAID/OTI and USAID implementing partners (most especially IDASA and CEDPA). Most of the people interviewed claim to be familiar with the works of USAID/Nigeria, most especially on democracy and good governance, and health-related issues. USAID’s work in support of the 2003 and 2004 elections are well known and widely appreciated. The conflict management work of USAID (through AAPW, IFESH etc.) is also well known among most of the people we interviewed. Our informants also claim to be familiar with the work of some USAID implementing partners, most especially IDASA (which supported some projects done by MOSOP). The work of CEDPA, most especially in the area of building women’s capacity for conflict management and participation in elections is also well known.

Concern has been expressed about the use of “middle-man” NGOs in assisting local CSOs in implementing development and conflict resolution projects. CSOs impressed upon the consultants the need for USAID and other donors to find ways to fund CSOs more directly, so that more of the funding reaches the grassroots where it is intended. Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) projects were also recognized as being of potential value, but it was observed that there was little or no follow-up to ensure that successes were institutionalized.

3.6 Approaches and Responses of Key Players and Stakeholders

Our informants alleged that most of the recent violent conflicts in Nigeria were directly attributable to the activities of state officials before, during and after the 2003 and 2004 elections. Such officials, the allegations claim, emphasize ethnic divisions, exacerbate and adversely “politicize” (through advocating intolerant positions) political issues, and arm the youth to fight. This, according to these informants, is why Nigerian state officials are usually not willing to support conflict resolution activities. Our interviewees also identified poverty as creating a fertile opportunity for ill-minded politicians successfully to recruit militant youths violently to fight on their behalf.

Donor agencies, most especially USAID, DfID, The British Council, Frederic Ebert Foundation, Open Society Initiatives of West Africa, Catholic Relief Services, etc. play significant roles in helping to deal with the root causes of all these problems. The work of USAID is the best known – most especially in terms of the resources committed and depth of the intervention. All these international organizations do their projects through the agency of Nigerian non-governmental organizations. A review of the activities of the NGOs working in Rivers and Delta States suggests that they use four major approaches in dealing with local conflict issues:

1. Sensitizing and training of stakeholders in peace work;
2. Facilitating stakeholders’ dialogue;
3. Developing understanding among stakeholders; and
4. Monitoring implementation of understandings.

Most of the projects done by the NGOs start with advocacy or conciliation visits during which conflict parties are made to appreciate the potential of non-violent mechanisms (communication, collaboration, negotiation, conciliation, and mediation) for dealing with their problems. The NGOs also seize this opportunity to familiarize themselves with the conflict issues: positions, interests and needs. The NGOs go to the next stage of the project by asking the conflict parties to identify their members to be invited to the peace talk (which in most cases ended up being conflict resolution workshops). During the workshop, the conflict parties are introduced to non-violent conflict management techniques. They are later challenged to try these techniques on their conflicts. The strategy in many cases and the room for dialogue between the two parties started from there. Setting up a peace-monitoring group to oversee the implementation of whatever agreements arose out of the peace process often characterizes the conclusion of many of these projects..

The lack of promoting collaboration and networking among the various local groups with whom various donors work is an important gap in typical donor approaches. Interviews revealed a lack of mutual awareness and cooperation among the various CSOs who are working on conflict resolution and/or development issues in the Niger Delta. This results in isolation that can be exploited by politicians and also reduces the potential impact of donor programs. Several factors contribute to this gap. There is great ethnic diversity in the Delta, and many CSOs have developed to address the perceived needs and injustices faced by particular groups. There may be actual conflict between some groups, perceived competition among them for donor funds or simply a communications gap across language and culture. The MSI Team also found distrust among the CSOs. For example, one group that received external funding was cautious about associating with more local CSOs fearing that these would be less accountable with funds and actions and thus might taint any collaborative efforts.

Another aspect of intervention approach is working directly with communities and CSOs. While this is crucial, it may leave out an important source of conflict – the behavior of government agencies themselves. CSCR reported problems when communities report environmental degradation caused by corporations to state agencies. These agencies often verify that corporations have made corrections when in fact little or nothing has been done. There is a pressing need to consider state roles and hold state agencies accountable by empowering CSOs collectively to undertake more effective monitoring, oversight, and advocacy.

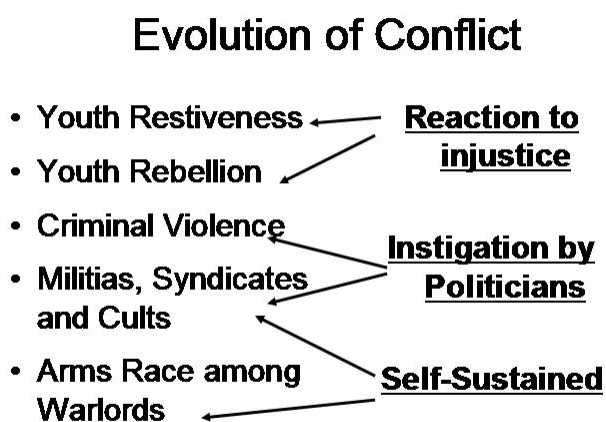
In the course of the MSI Team's fieldwork, the following NGOs were found to have made an indelible impact on the management of the conflicts in the Niger Delta:

Table 3.4			
Organization	Project	Funder	Expected Outcomes
Academic Associates Peacework	Warri Peace Project 1998	United States Institute of Peace, Washington DC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A book • Conflict Management workshops • Inter-ethnic Peace committee
Academic Associates Peacework	Warri Forum on Peace, Security and Human Rights	Delta State government, Chevron-Texaco and USAID.	Stakeholders' dialogue on building sustainable peace in Warri.
Academic Associates Peacework	Niger Delta Partnering project	Macarthur Foundation, Chicago and Niger Delta Development Commission.	Promoting permanent partnership between stakeholders in the Niger Delta crisis.
The International Foundation for Education and Self-Help [IFESH]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV/AIDS • Technical Skills Training • Educational Infrastructural development, and • Book supplies 	Chevron-Texaco	Improving livelihood of the people
The International Foundation for Education and Self-Help [IFESH]	Relief services/conflict transformation trainings/building the capacity of the people for sustainable peace.	USAID/Chevron-Texaco	An inter-ethnic peace committee that will help to identify permanent solutions to the Warri crisis; Warri peace agreement
Niger Delta Civil Society Coalition	Niger Delta Peace Initiatives	Self sponsorship	Making all human rights groups in the Niger Delta come together to deal with issues of youth demobilization and constructive engagement
Niger Delta Professionals for Development [NIDPRODEV]	Niger Delta Peace Initiatives	IDASA	Promoting non-violence among Niger Delta youths.
Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People [MOSOP]	Ogoni Peace Project	IDASA, Membership fees	Promoting non-violence in Ogoniland.

Table 3.4			
Organization	Project	Funder	Expected Outcomes
Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, The Presidency, Abuja	Strategic Conflict Assessment	USAID, DFID, UNDP, the World Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive information on the conflicts in Nigeria; • A book
Institute for Democracy in South Africa [IDASA]	Conflict mitigation projects. Worked with MOSOP, OPC leadership; organized the 2004 Foundation course in Peace Practice at the University of Ibadan; trained election monitors; worked with National Association of Nigeria Students for peaceful 2003 elections.	USAID	Building the capacity of CRESNET and University of Ibadan in peace practice; Working with community organizations to build peace.
Centre for Population and Development [CEDPA]	Conflict mitigation projects	USAID	To empower community leaders [most especially] women in peace-building, peacemaking and preventive diplomacy

Figure 3.2 provides a summary of the evolution of conflict in the Niger Delta. Key informants explained that the youth are key players in the evolution of violence, but that community leaders, petroleum company staff and government officials all played roles in pressuring youth to go to the next level of violence. What started as a natural response to perceived injustices including land degradation and loss of livelihood became institutionalized as youth militias when industry, government and donor responses were not seen to address the basic injustices, but only exacerbate these.

Figure 3.2. Evolution of Conflict



From 1960 to early 1990s conflict was characterized as youth restiveness, which was a reaction to injustice in the distribution of oil wealth and to often-severe environmental pollution. Between 1994 and 1999, youth rebellion arose. This could be traced to the persistence in the problems faced by the Niger Delta people and political repression. Then from 2000 to 2001 youth rebellion began to evolve into criminal violence. Oil companies and politicians paid off violent youth. The phase between 2002 and 2003 saw the “professionalization” of criminal violence by militias, syndicates and cults. There was fast growth of cult

groups, thug armies raised by politicians, and widespread availability of arms. Politicians and oil bunkerers instigated violence during the 2003 and 2004 elections.

Looking from 2004 to 2007 one can arguably predict: a) an arms race among political warlords; b) oil bunkerers gaining a better foothold that would see rigging of elections facilitated by armed youth, c) difficulty in retrieving arms from militants, d) sporadic killings by militant groups, e) ethnic militias become “contractors”, f) stolen oil fueling political and criminal violence, and g) violence detached from historical causes. The cycle repeats as politicians and oil bunkerers invest in more arms and violent activities. Finally from 2007 and beyond there would be inability of the state to control arms trafficking or to check oil theft. Oil production would be taken over by militias and violence would become self-sustaining.

3.7 Gaps in the Sampled Interventions

The MSI Team noted a variety of important gaps:

- a) The NGOs working in different parts of the Niger Delta do not network. Each does its own thing and hardly shares information with the other;
- b) NGOs not networking adequately with the government in dealing with the problems; Government not networking with NGOs.
- c) The donor agencies funding peace projects are also not networking. Each does its own thing. This gives room for wasteful duplication of efforts;
- d) The oil companies in the Niger Delta also compete with each other rather than cooperate in dealing with the Niger Delta problems. The Macarthur and NNPC projects done by AAPW, however, could provide a plank for bringing all these oil companies together to work on the Niger Delta crisis;
- e) The Niger Delta region has serious problems of human displacement yet none of the organizations working in the region have any grounded training in humanitarian intervention. Trial and errors methods are thus used;
- f) None of the organizations working in the region have any grounded training in creating and applying conflict early warning systems. Trial and errors methods are thus used. IDASA tried to solve this problem by training 30 conflict management practitioners on related issues at the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan (March 13 – April 7, 2004). Only two of the participants at this training program came from the Niger Delta;
- g) Women’s issues are marginalized in most of the projects;
- h) The role of the media in the conflict is not emphasized in most of the projects. Most of the cult killings in Rivers State, for example, are not reported. The media on the other hand “over reported” the Warri crisis and in the process contributed to its escalation;
- i) Most of the NGOs, except AAPW, lack the institutional capabilities to adequately document their accomplishments. They claimed to have achieved a lot but all these achievements are not formally reported anywhere; and
- j) Those funding peace projects in the Niger Delta need the swift approach of USAID/OTI for better results.

3.8 Some Important Questions

- a) How do we link development to conflict management programs in the Niger Delta?
- b) How do we design intervention programs that do not reward violence?
- c) How do we strengthen the capacity of local government authorities to deal with conflict issues (land, youth etc.)?
- d) How do we encourage NGOs to work together and share information?
- e) How do we encourage the other stakeholders (the government, oil companies, LGAs, CBOs, CSOs etc.) work together and share information?
- f) How do we develop and manage an actionable early warning system for the Niger Delta?
And,
- g) How do we monitor and evaluate future interventions in the Niger Delta crisis?

3.9 Prospective areas of engagement for USAID/Nigeria in Southern Nigeria

The MSI Team suggest the following potential areas for effective implementation measures by USAID:

- a) Promoting non-violence and dialogue between conflict parties;
- b) Direct intervention (through conciliation, mediation, or arbitration) in community conflicts;
- c) Rehabilitation and reintegration of displaced persons (provision of relief services, traumatic counseling, micro credit, agricultural production, etc.);
- d) Reorientation, demobilization and reintegration of militant youths;
- e) Reinvigorating the criminal justice system for efficient, transparent, and accountable performance (the police, courts etc.);
- f) Promoting transformational leadership (emphasizing integrity and commitment to a shared vision of positive change) among community leaders, local government and state government functionaries, politicians and career civil servants;
- g) Working with the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution to have a “National Peace Policy” in Nigeria;
- h) Supporting peace education programs in secondary schools;
- i) Putting in place and maintaining actionable conflict early warning systems;
- j) Promoting partnership between stakeholders (government, NGOs, the youth, security officials, oil companies etc.) in conflict management; and
- k) Training of NGOs for better performance:
 - a. Humanitarian intervention,
 - b. Design and application of conflict early warning systems, and
 - c. Capacity strengthening and documentation skills, networking skills and preparedness, and effective management skills.

3.10 The Way Forward: Networking in the Context of Comparative Advantage

USAID will conserve much of its resources and gain better “mileage” by encouraging the stakeholders in the Niger Delta to work together. The following is suggested:

Stakeholders Meeting: The Niger Delta crisis is a major problem that all Nigerians and lovers of Nigeria should work together to solve. If the region is completely taken over by militias after the 2007 elections (as some have predicted), Nigeria will lose more than 50% of its foreign earnings and the oil companies in the region would be forced to operate offshore. USAID can help to prevent this from occurring by initiating and facilitating a meeting of the major stakeholders in the Niger Delta crisis. The meeting will help the stakeholders to have a better understanding of the present problem; what could be done to remove them and what role each stakeholder has to play. At the end of the workshop, it should be clearer what particular role USAID would be expected to play in the overall conflict management objectives drawn for the Niger Delta.

Micro/Development Interventions: USAID needs to invest a substantial part of its resources in dealing with the micro issues in the prevention of violence in the region. It needs to partner with the New Foundation and IITA in addressing agricultural projects. It should provide more support to AAPW and IFESH to continue their work in Warri. AAPW needs better support for bringing the militant Niger Delta youths together and going further to build effective communications between them and the other stakeholders in the Niger Delta crisis. Direct work with local CSOs also is needed.

Utilizing Local Resources: The Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, CRESNET and the Peace and Conflict Studies Programme, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan should be contracted to organize skills-based training programs for the CSOs and CBOs to be involved in the various conflict management projects to be funded by USAID.

Balancing Work with Local Councils and NGOs: It is desirable for USAID to work with local government councils in its focal states in the Niger Delta but this has to be carefully done. Most of the LGAs functionaries are believed to have obtained their offices by corrupt or illicit means, and if so, will not be considered as trustworthy by the people. None of these corrupt or tainted local government councils should be allowed any significant management role in any USAID conflict mitigation project, although the importance of local government involvement in efforts to prevent or mediate conflict warrant further attention. Such a project might best be awarded to reputable NGOs with a good image in the community. The NGOs must however be required to work closely with the LGAs. For example, MOSOP could be contracted to work in different parts of Ogoniland. The organization is well respected by the Ogoni people and is in contact with all levels of stakeholders in the development of Ogoniland, including the oil companies operating in the area. The involvement of LGAs in the management of this kind of project could include identification of the participants and joint implementation of the outcomes of the project (e.g. provision of office space for the meeting of peace monitoring committees or early warning signs monitors, etc.).

Address Disarmament: The problem of arms proliferation in the Niger Delta is a matter of the gravest national concern. USAID should encourage the GON and members of the international community (most especially the UN) to view the problem as such, and as a problem that warrants the highest priority attention. All of the non-governmental organizations that the MSI Team interacted with in the course of this consultancy currently lack the capacity to deal effectively with this problem. It is recommended that an international consultant who is well familiar with the demobilization of “child soldiers” in places like Liberia and Sierra Leone be hired to provide

guidance on the best response to this situation. Most of the people interviewed on the matter lack any scientific approaches for dealing with small arms proliferation. The most common suggestion that the MSI Team received from the people we interacted with on the matter was to employ a “cash-for-gun” strategy for reducing the number of weapons in circulation. Arguably, in the Nigeria context, this might actually further escalate the problem. Militant youths in the Niger Delta are already in contact with the markets for buying these arms cheaply, and what they might be paid for dropping a unit of their acquired arms might end up being sufficient for acquiring more and better armaments.

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